



Embassy of the United States of America

American Citizen Services
24 Grosvenor Square
London, W1A 2LQ

CHILDREN'S ISSUES

INTERNATIONAL PARENTAL CHILD ABDUCTION

The Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction came into force between the United States and the United Kingdom on July 1, 1988. For in-depth information on the workings of the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, visit the Department of State's [International Parental Child Abduction Page](#).

What to do if your child has been abducted:

From the United States to the United Kingdom: If your child has been abducted from the United States to the United Kingdom, you should file an application with the U.S. Central Authority at: [Application For Assistance Under the Hague Convention on Child Abduction](#) (in PDF format). For guidance and instructions on completing the application form, refer to the U.S. Central Authority's [Hague Application Instructions](#).

From the United Kingdom to the United States: If your child has been abducted from the United Kingdom to the United States, you should file an application with the UK Central Authority application at: <http://www.officialsolicitor.gov.uk/os/icacu.htm>

Child Custody Solicitors: The Embassy maintains a list of solicitors who specialize in international child custody issues; for more information, please click on this link: [Child Custody Solicitors](#)

Preventing Child Abduction

If you are a resident of the United Kingdom and fear that your U.S. citizen child might be taken abroad by the other parent without your consent, the child's name can be entered into the U.S. passport name check system. Then, if an application for a passport for your child is received, you will be informed before issuance of the passport.

When there is an order from a court of competent jurisdiction prohibiting the removal of a child from the jurisdiction of the court and/or the requesting party without prior

consent, and the order is provided to the American Citizen Services Section of the U.S. Embassy in London, an application for a U.S. passport may be denied.

Requests for entry of a child's name in the passport name check system, and, if relevant, court orders should be sent to:

American Citizen Services
U.S. Embassy
24 Grosvenor Square
London W1A 2LQ
Phone: 020-7499-9000
Fax: 020-7495-5012

Other Resources

- The Department of State's [International Parental Child Abduction](#) website.
- Reunite International: www.reunite.org
- UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Child Abduction Section:
<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/things-go-wrong/child-abduction>
- National Center For Missing and Exploited Children: www.missingkids.com

INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTIONS

U.S. Adoption Procedures: The Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption came into force for the United States on April 1, 2008. For in-depth information on intercountry adoptions, both those started before and after implementation of the Hague Convention in the United States, visit the Department of State's [Hague Convention Intercountry Adoption Page](#).

UK Adoption Procedures: The Department for Education and Skills (DFES) is responsible for adoption policy, domestic and intercountry, in the United Kingdom. For in-depth information on British adoption regulations, visit the DFES [Intercountry Adoption Page](#).

Child Abuse Registry Checks/Criminal Background Checks: The UK Government maintains decentralized child abuse registries for 86 of its counties. However, the child abuse registries are only searchable by the name of an affected child, not/not by the name of an offender. Information regarding an offender would be found on a UK police certificate, which each prospective adoptive parent would be required to apply for from the UK authorities if they had resided in the United Kingdom for longer than a year.

The information on the child abuse registries (formerly called the Child Protection Register, now called the Integrated Children's System) can only be accessed by UK-licensed social workers. Generally, social workers from other countries are not able to access the registry due to UK Data Protection Act restrictions.

A website is available which shows how to access information, who is authorized to access the information, and the legislation governing the access to the database. The website address is: www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/deliveringservices/contactpoint
<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/deliveringservices/contactpoint>.

For information on obtaining criminal background checks, see our website at

http://london.usembassy.gov/cons_new/acs/scs/criminal_records_checks_in_the_united_states.html.

CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT

The United States and the United Kingdom concluded a bilateral agreement on child support enforcement on December 17, 2007. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Support Enforcement (<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/>) is the U.S. Central Authority for this agreement.

The following information briefly explains the steps parents should take to request enforcement of child support orders when the absent parent is in the other country. More information is available on the Department of State's website at http://travel.state.gov/family/services/support/support_2615.html

Applications made in the United States for support from a parent in the United Kingdom: Applications should be made to your local Child Support Enforcement Office (IV-D Agency) at your local Department of Human Services. It is the responsibility of the Child Support Enforcement office to forward the application to the UK Reciprocal Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Section (REMO) located within the Department for Constitutional Affairs at the following address: Department For Constitutional Affairs, REMO Section, Selborne House (4th Floor), 56-60 Victoria Street, London SW1E 6QW; tel: 0845-345-5303; website: <http://www.dca.gov.uk/family/remo/contents.htm>; e-mail: remo@dca.gsi.gov.uk. The REMO Section will forward the application to the nearest English or Welsh County Court where the absent parent resides and will endeavor to enforce it.

Applications made in England and Wales for support from a parent in the United States: Applications should be made to the Justices' Clerk of your local Magistrate's Court. The Justices' Clerk is required to forward the application to the REMO Section at the Department for Constitutional Affairs as explained above. It is the responsibility of the REMO Section to forward the application to the Child Support Enforcement Office (IV-D Agency) in the particular U.S. state where the absent parent resides. That authority will endeavor to enforce the order.

CHILD PROTECTION AND NEGLECT ISSUES

If you wish to discuss a child protection matter, please send an e-mail to:
SCSLondon@state.gov